THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE;

OR

Weekly Intelligence

IN THE CIVIL, NATURAL, MORAL, LITERARY AND RELIGIOUS WORLDS.

CALCULATED PARTICULARLY FOR THE PERUSAL OF THE YOUNG, AND THOSE OF RETIRED HABITS OF LIFE.

PUBLISHED INDEPENDENTLY OF ANY INTERESTED PARTY ATTACHMENT, AND WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE PRINCIPLES OF TRUTH AND PURITY.

VOL. I.] *PHILADELPHIA, SEVENTH-DAY, 2d of Second Month,* 1805. [No. 8.

The price of the Evening Fire-side is three dollars per annum, payable at the end of the first quarter.

For the Evening Fire-side.

MOTIVES TO BENEVOLENCE.

"*'Tis more blessed to give than to receive.*"

" It seems the part of Wisdom, and no sin
Against the law of Love, to measure lots
With less distinguished than ourselves; that thus
We may with patience bear our moderate ills,
And sympathize with others suffering more."

COWPER.

There is scarcely any virtue that yields the mind a surer or more delightful recompense, than active beneficence; and I know no situation in which the Christian shines with such unequivocal lustre, as when he is going from house to house, relieving distress, or preventing its entrance: it is a delightful employ to chase away misery from the habitation of suffering poverty, to introduce relief, and raise the smile of gratitude and joy. These are actions which diffuse the calm sunshine of peace over the heart, and to which the benevolent actor may recur with delight, when the lamp of health burns dim, or the world ceases to smile.

There are many advantages attending the exercise of benevolence, which we lose by constant communion with the wealthy or the prosperous. It is in the house of wo that our own little troubles dwindle into nothing, or sink into obscurity; the magnitude of another's misfortune hides from us our own, or raises the grateful acknowledgment, that our afflictions are but small: thus we are enabled to

——"with patience bear our moderate ills,
" And sympathize with others suffering more."

'Tis there we see the instability of human affairs, and are taught a due dependence on the blessings of Providence, from whose bountiful hand our tables are filled with good things.

But alas! if we go not to the house of mourning, the enjoyment of ease, and the comforts of plenty, make us to forget those who are worn with excessive labour or languish in hopeless penury. We hear the tale of distress with the same incredulity as the stories of Romance; it appears to be magnified beyond the measure of reality, and we are apt to conclude, that truth would bring it down to the little dimensions of a trifling calamity.

Thus we may pass on from year to year, ignorant of the miseries that environ us; and, nursed in the bosom of affluence, believe not that want and famine are preying upon our fellow citizens. A cursory reflection on the fertility of our soil, and the excellence of our government, the advantage of our commerce, and the opulence of our country, with the numerous calls for labour, easily leads us to suppose, that the arm of industry cannot want employment, nor diligence lack bread: But a more intimate acquaintance with the state of society, will soon force us to acknowledge, that amidst all these advantages there is *still* such a state as *suffering poverty;* we shall find that in the variety which constitutes the poorer classes of society, some are more enterprising, some more diffident; there are some that can push into employ or procure assistance, whilst others are easily dejected, and resign themselves to suffer, ere they have attained their object. Though the latter really deserve commiseration and pity, I shall not hold them up as the principal objects of charity and relief; there yet remain on the list, to attract our regard, the helpless widow and her orphan family, the sick, and the lame, the aged, and the infirm. Many of the latter descriptions are barely able to supply themselves with the comforts of existence when summer smiles upon them—what then must they suffer beneath the frowns of winter?

I know it is not uncommon to hear some exclaim, " They have brought it on themselves, they deserve to suffer."—Such unfeeling remarks must affect every generous mind with pain; they discover symptoms of a hard heart, and an ignorance of that blessedness which ever attends the cheerful giver. He that " maketh his sun to shine on the just and on the unjust, and his rain to descend on the evil and on the good," has set us a worthy example in the exercise of Charity: besides, there are many reputable members of the community in reduced circumstances, to whom the extension of benevolence, if tendered with delicacy, would be acceptable and grateful; there are others, whose arms are palsied with sickness, and unable to labour, and there are many, who, by the infirmities of age, and the severity of the season, are rendered incapable of maintaining themselves. Winter now reigns with terrors! He has locked up our rivers and embargoed our vessels: where " lately the gallant ship passed by," are now seen the horse and his rider, the carriage and its burthen. Commerce hangs his hands—" his ten thousand wheels" no longer " thunder loud," and many of the poor are deprived of a source of employment, once amply sufficient to supply them with the comforts of life.

Let us, then, who are blessed with plenty, gratefully consider who it is " that maketh us to differ from another." Let us remember that we are but accountable stewards; for " what have we that we did not receive?" Let us reflect, that there is no greater pleasure than that which arises from active beneficence; and when we know that we are surrounded by supplicating misery, let us call to mind the language of the Redeemer: " Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these MY BRETHREN, ye have done it unto me."

1st mo. 22d. VAROLA.

To the Editors of the Evening Fire-side.

If you think the following simple effusion, worthy of a place in your paper, you are welcome to insert it.

An Autumnal Musing, written in the latter part of September, 1804.

Sweet Robin, why that pensive lay
Soft warbling from the naked spray?
Are all thy tuneful mates away,
And thou, lorn bird, forsaken?
Thine eye surveys the russet plains;
Thou hear'st the turtle's dying strains,
Which, thrilling thro' thy tender veins,
These woe-fraught tones awaken.

They tell of joys forever fled,
When round thee spring her blossoms shed;
Her balmy gales, thy pinions spread;
And every note was pleasure.
When, opening with the golden day,
In rival songs, thy comrades gay
Pour'd music from each trembling spray;
And gladness knew no measure.

As thine, my blooming spring is past;
While, sober autumn's hollow blast
Forewarns my soul of winter's waste;
And all my prospects languish.
While, ravish'd from my faithful side,
Those friends, by generous warmth ally'd,
Who smooth'd for me life's ruffled tide;
Now, swell my heart with anguish.

Ne'er shall the radiant eye of morn
See health's own blush my cheek adorn;
No more with smiles, the glad return,
Of vernal seasons hailing:
Yet, Patience lends her friendly arm;
Domestic joys my bosom warm;
And, HOPE displays her angel charm,
O'er Pain and Grief prevailing.

For though to me, no second spring,
Shall fancy's ardent treasures bring;
Like thee, I'll raise a bolder wing,
To happier regions soaring:
The STAR, whose mild benignant ray,
O'er Bethl'em shed celestial day,
Shall cheer and guide, my lonely way,
Those sacred heights exploring.

ROLAND.

DEFENCE OF A MONASTIC LIFE.

I have ever warned you, my dear child, against the illiberality of general reproach: and the design in these instances of abuse is so nefarious, that contempt seems too cold a censure of such pitiful endeavours to acquire fame and emolument, by increasing the delirium which induces people to hate what is high, and to despise what is old. I would advise you to read with qualifying considerations whatever our histories tell us of the depravity of the Roman Catholic clergy prior to the reformation. The narratives which will fall under your eye are detailed by Protestants; and when we consider how oppressive the hierarchy of the church of Rome was, and how much the political conduct of its sons had exasperated the minds of the people, we can scarcely wonder, that, when those people came to discover by what a fraudulent system they had been oppressed, their resentment should not be wholly confined to detecting the real guilt and folly of popery, but should frequently burst out in invectives against its ministers, which were too general to be strictly just. Most of the reformers were men of great sincerity and austere manners; their passions, which seem to have been naturally strong, were irritated by cruel, unjust oppression, and heightened by that holy zeal for divine truth, which prompted them to brave danger and death in its defence. Allowing for the imperfections incident to human nature, we must admit, that the portraits which Luther and others exhibit of their opponents and persecutors, are in danger of being overcharged.

In these more tranquil times, the reformed religion appeals to the oracles of God in proof of its pre-eminence, not to the depravity of the Roman Catholic clergy.

Do not, however, think me an apologist for the crimes that have been clearly proved against the religious of those times. I shudder at the dreadful recital; but, when we consider what a numerous body they then were, I think candour obliges us to refrain from stigmatizing them with universal odium. The doctrine which I would inforce is, that as people who have the least temptations to vice are generally the most virtuous, and as those who know a little of their duty are more likely to practice it than those who are totally ignorant; so the recluse life of the monk, and the small share of learning which he possessed, were likely to make him a better man than those who were engaged in the scenes of contention which England then exhibited, and who knew nothing but what they derived from their spiritual instructors. If the monastery often "cozen'd folly and shelter'd fraud," a little reflection and attention to historical facts, must convince you, that it still more frequently sheltered the unfortunate, and fed the hungry. What amiable pictures do travellers through thinly-peopled and distracted countries often give us, of the piety, benevolence, resignation, industry, and hospitality of some venerable fathers, whose recluse convent, pitched upon a lofty precipice, is respected by conflicting tribes, and preserves an aspect of serenity amidst danger and dismay! we should grow enamoured of the description, did not some absurd tale of wonder-working relics, or some species of imposition on the miserable ignorant natives who live near them, impress on our minds the offensive ideas of the spiritual tyranny and superstition of those who yet retain the only traces of civilized life which these wilds exhibit. And yet, on the whole, notwithstanding their legends and their contributions, these fathers are a blessing to those among whom they reside, teaching them the arts of life, and accumulating a fund out of their present abundance, to provide a store for their future wants.

The situation of England, during the times that I am now speaking of, was very similar to that of countries which are above described; and by a parity of reasoning I would infer, that, as human nature, under the same degree of civilization, generally presents the same aspect, a few instances (for when so numerous a body is implicated, many hundred instances are but few) of atrocious guilt, even supported by indisputable evidence, should not induce a candid mind to believe, that, generally speaking, the monastic order were unlike what we now find them to be in similar situations and circumstances: at least the daubings of deistical fiction are no proof to the contrary. Scorning such substitutions of fact, let us consider them as men living in a very dark period, and let us not be so unjust as to try them by the light which we now possess. It would be uncandid to believe, that they wilfully supported popery while they thought it to be a most iniquitous perversion of divine truth. We have certain grounds for knowing, that they had not sufficient learning to detect its fallacy. They took the matter upon trust; and, with respect to the fraudulent miracles by which they imposed upon the people, we know that a zeal without knowledge is always blind. The vitiated principles of the church justified the inventor of these tricks, who was at liberty to do evil if it were

productive of future good. But in most instances the propagators of these pious frauds were rather credulous dupes, than ambitious impostors.

[*Letters from a Mother to her Son.*

Reflections on Despotism.

Man in a state of simplicity, uncorrupted by the influence of bad education, bad examples, and bad government, possesses a taste for all that is good and beautiful. He is capable of a degree of moral and intellectual improvement, which advances his nature to a participation with the divine. The world, in all its magnificence, appears to him one vast theatre, richly adorned and illuminated, into which he is freely admitted, to enjoy the glorious spectacle. Acknowledging no natural superior but the great architect of the whole fabric, he partakes the delight with conscious dignity, and glows with gratitude. Pleased with himself and all around him, his heart dilates with benevolence, as well as piety; and he finds his joys augmented by communication. His countenance cheerful, his mind erect, he rejoices in existence.—Life is a continual feast to him, highly seasoned by virtue, by liberty, by mutual affection. God formed him to be happy, and he becomes so, thus fortunately unmolested by false policy and oppression. Religion, reason, nature, are his guides through the whole of his existence, and the whole is happy. VIRTUOUS INDEPENDENCE, the sun, which irradiates the morning of his day, and warms its noon, tinges the serene evening with every beautiful variety of colour, and, on the pillow of religious hope, he sinks to repose in the bosom of providence.

But where is man to be found, thus noble, thus innocent, thus happy? Not, indeed, in so many parts of the terraqueous globe as he ought to be; but still he is to be found wherever the rights of nature and the virtues of simplicity are not violated or banished by the false refinement, the base artifices of corrupted government.

Unhappily for man, society has been almost universally corrupted, even by the arts intended for its improvement; and human nature is gradually depraved in its very progress to civilization. Metamorphosed by the tampering of unskilful or dishonest politicians, and the craft of interested priests, co-operating with politicians, man at present appears, in many countries, a diminutive and distorted animal, compared with what he was in his primeval state. He is become the dwarf and the cripple of courts and cities, instead of the well-formed, beautiful creature, who once bounded, in the glory of health and strength, over the forest and the mountain, glowing with the warmth of virtue, and breathing the spirit of independence.

Various are the causes which contribute to the factitious depravity of man. Defective and erroneous education corrupts him; the prevalent examples of a degenerate community corrupt him; but bad government corrupts him more than all other causes combined. The grand adversary of human virtue and happiness is Despotism. Look over the surface of the whole earth, and behold man, the glory and deputed lord of the creation, withering under the influence of despotism, like the plant of temperate climes scorched by the sun of a torrid zone.—The leaf is sickly, the blossom dares not expand its beauty, and no fruit arrives at its just size and maturity. Turkey, Italy, Egypt! how changed from what ye were when inhabited by ancient Greeks, Romans, Egyptians! Nature, indeed, still smiles upon them with unaltered favour. The blue mantle of the skies is still spread over them in all its luminous magnificence. There is no reason to suppose the earth less fertile. The corn laughs in the valleys. The tree aspires to Heaven with all its original verdure and majesty. But MAN decays; withered, shrunk, enervated; a form without spirit; an animal less happy than the beasts of the field, and more ignoble, inasmuch as degeneracy is baser than native, original, created inferiority. Fallen with the columnar ruins of better times, over which, in these countries, he often tramples, MAN himself appears little better than a ruin, displaying all the deformity of the mouldering pile, with scarcely any vestige of its former magnificence.

It would equally contradict philosophy and experience to attribute this moral degeneracy to the decay of nature's vigor. There is no reason to conclude that the natural faculties of men who inhabit countries once free, but now enslaved, are produced in a state of less perfection at this hour, than in the days of their illustrious forefathers. Anatomy discovers no defect in the fibres of the heart or the brain; yet the degeneracy remains uncontested. In truth, *government* has counteracted the beneficence of nature. The MEN are fallen; while the *human figures*, with their internal and external organization, continue similar, or the same. They are inactive and pusillanimous. They aspire at no extraordinary excellence or achievements; but crouch beneath their despot, glad of the poor privilege allowed them by a fellow-creature, as weak and more wicked than themselves, to eat, drink, sleep and die. Any pre-eminent degree of merit among them would render the distinguished possessor of it fatally illustrious, the certain object of a tyrant's vengeance; and they find their best security in their want of virtue. By a voluntary submission to contempt, they retain and transmit the privilege of breathing, and build the bulwark of their safety on their personal insignificance.

FEAR must of necessity become the predominant passion in all countries subject to the uncontrolled dominion of an individual and his ministers: but fear chills the blood, and freezes the faculties. Under its icy influence there can arise no generous emulation, no daring spirit of adventure. Enterprise is considered as dangerous, not merely from the general casualty of all human affairs, but because it excites notice, and alarms the jealousy of selfish power. Under a despotic government, to steal through life unobserved, to creep, with timid caution, through the vale of obscurity, is the first wisdom; and to be suffered to die in old age, without the prison, the chain, the dagger, or the poisoned bowl, the highest pitch of human felicity.

IGNORANCE of the grossest kind, ignorance of man's nature and rights, ignorance of all that tends to make and keep us happy, disgraces and renders wretched more than half the earth, at this moment, in consequence of its subjugation to despotic power. Ignorance, robed in imperial purple, with pride and cruelty by her side, sways an iron sceptre over more than one hemisphere. In the finest and largest regions of this planet which we inhabit, are no liberal pursuits and professions, no contemplative delights, nothing of that pure, intellectual employment which raises man from the mire of sensuality and sordid care, to a degree of excellence and dignity, which we conceive to be angelic and celestial. Without knowledge or the means of obtaining it, without exercise or excitements, the mind falls into a state of infantine imbecility and dotage; or acquires a low cunning, intent only on selfish and mean pursuits, such as is visi-

ble in the more ignoble of the irrational creatures, in foxes, apes, and monkeys. Among nations so corrupted, the utmost effort of genius is a court intrigue or a ministerial cabal.

A degradation of the understanding, like this, is usually accompanied with depravity of heart. From an inability to find pleasure and honourable employment in the energies of thought, in noble and virtuous actions, in refined conversation, in arts, in commerce, in learning, arises a mischievous activity in trifles, a perversion of nature, a wantonness of wickedness, productive of flagitious habits, which render the partaker of reason the most despicable and detestable animal in the whole circle of existence.—Thus sunk under the pressure of despotism, who can recognize, notwithstanding the human shape they bear, the lineal descendants of Egyptian, Grecian, Roman worthies, the glory of their times, the luminaries of their own country and the world, the instructors and benefactors of human nature? Thus the image of the Deity, stamped on man at his creation, is defiled or utterly effaced by government, instituted and exercised by man over his fellow-man; and his kindred to Heaven is known no more by the divine resemblance. A bad government is therefore the curse of the earth, the scourge of man, the grand obstacle to the divine will, the most copious source of all moral evil, and for that reason, of all misery; but of bad governments, none are comparable, in their mischievous effects, to the despotic.

But if despotism in its *extreme* produces consequences thus malignant, reason will infer, and experience will justify the inference, that all the *subordinate degrees* of despotism are proportionally destructive. However it may be disguised by forms, it is ever seeking its own increase and aggrandizement, by openly crushing, or secretly undermining, the fabric of liberty: it is ever encroaching on the privileges and enjoyments of those who are subjected to it; greedily, though foolishly, wishing to engross every good of every kind in this sublunary state, except the good of virtue.

[*Knox's Essays.*

FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

Lines from H. H. to her friend A. P. previous to her marriage.

Delia, my feeble muse once more essays
To mark in numbers pure, devoid of art,
Feelings that ne'er aspir'd to gilded praise;
But flow unsullied from a tender heart.

Know then, my dear, soft tears fill Emma's eye,
When recollection names the appointed day,----
My bosom heaves the fond, the friendly sigh,
Yet bids me part, and says I must away.

Far from my Delia and the rural bower,
Where lovely converse chas'd away each care,
Where oft we prov'd the sweets of friendship's power,
Call'd just her mandates, and her beauties fair;

Smil'd on the raptures of pure friendship's joy,
Glow'd on the theme, and fann'd the mutual flame;
The blissful moments pass'd without alloy,
And morn and eve with tranquil pleasure came.

To scenes like these must Emma say adieu;
Or ah! articulate the word farewell!
Be still, my heart, to love and friendship true,
In vain I strive my tender woes to tell.

My tender solace will not *Marcus* prove;
Catch my soft sighs, and wipe my falling tear?
Teach me the gentle joys of wedded love;
Unmix'd with sorrow or heart-rending care?

To the Editors of the Evening Fire-side.

The following letter is copied from an old periodical publication, printed nearly forty years ago. I hope its contents will be acceptable to your readers, though it is not original. I have seen several attempts to imitate it, but I think they are much inferior in spirit and application; besides, the circumstances which gave rise to it are interesting; and it furnishes a specimen of the wonderful talents of its author.

Yours,

AMICUS.

ON TOLERATION.

London, April 16, 1764.

Sir,

Some time ago being in company with a friend from North America (*Dr. Franklin*) the conversation happened to turn on the subject of persecution. My friend, whose understanding is as enlarged as his heart is benevolent, did not fail to urge many unanswerable arguments against a practice so obviously repugnant to every dictate of humanity. At length, in support of what he had advanced, he called for a bible, and turning to the book of Genesis, read as follows:

CHAPTER XXVII.

1. And it came to pass after these things, that Abraham sat in the door of his tent, about the going down of the sun,

2. And behold, a man bowed with age, coming from the way of the wilderness leaning on a staff.

3. And Abraham arose, and met him, and said unto him, turn in, I pray thee, and wash thy feet, and tarry all night; and thou shalt arise early in the morning, and go on thy way.

4. But the man said, nay, for I will abide under this tree.

5. And Abraham pressed him greatly; so he turned, and they went into the tent: and Abraham baked unleavened bread, and they did eat.

6. And when Abraham saw that the man blessed not God, he said unto him, Wherefore dost thou not worship the most high God, creator of Heaven and Earth?

7. And the man answered and said, I do not worship thy God, neither do I call upon his name; for I have made to myself a God, which abideth alway in mine house, and provideth me with all things.

8. And Abraham's zeal was kindled against the man, and he arose, and fell upon him, and drave him forth with blows into the wilderness.

9. And at midnight God called unto Abraham, saying, Abraham, where is the stranger?

10. And Abraham answered and said, Lord, he would not worship thee, neither would he call upon thy name; therefore have I driven him out from before my face, into the wilderness.

11. And God said, have I borne with him these hundred ninety and eight years, and nourished him, and clothed him, notwithstanding his rebellion against me; and couldest not thou, that art thyself a sinner, bear with him one night?

12. And Abraham said, Let not the anger of the Lord wax hot against his servant: lo, I have sinned; forgive me, I pray thee.

13. And he arose, and went forth into the wilderness, and sought diligently for the man, and found him:

14. And returned with him to his tent; and when he had entreated him kindly, he sent him away in the morning with gifts.

15. And God spake again unto Abraham, saying, for this thy sin, shall thy seed be afflicted four hundred years in a strange land.

16. But for thy repentance will I deliver them; and they shall come forth with power, and with gladness of heart, and with much substance.

I own I was struck with the aptness of the passage to the subject; and did not fail to express my surprise, that in all the discourses I had read against a practice so diametrically opposite to the genuine spirit of our holy religion, I did not remember to have seen this chapter quoted;

nor did I recollect my ever having read it, though no stranger to my bible. Next morning turning to the book of Genesis, I found there was no such chapter, and that the whole was a well meant invention of my friend, whose sallies of humour, in which he is a great master, have always an useful and benevolent tendency.

With some difficulty I procured a copy of what he pretended to read, which I now send you, for the entertainment of your readers; and you will perhaps think it not unseasonable at a time when we are more particularly called upon to commemorate the amazing love of HIM, who, possessing the divine virtue of Charity in the most supreme degree, laid down his life even for his enemies.

I am, &c.

W. S.

Extract from a Work lately published in London, entitled the Evangelical Magazine.

The following was delivered by Job Scott, at the close of the yearly meeting of Friends held at London, 1793.

I have felt a little matter attend my mind, during the several sittings of this meeting; and although some part of it may seem to be rather of a delicate nature, I believe it right to communicate it to this meeting.

I believed, before the commencement of the present troubles, that there would be commotions, and overturnings, with rumours of wars; which, I believe, will not *yet* be over: and this land will have its share.

For some of the latter years of my life, I have been more and more convinced, that "Mystical Babylon, the Mother "of Harlots,"—that had "made the "people drunk with the cup of her For-"nication," would be destroyed; and those who have drank of her cup and partaken of her pleasures, would be made to partake of her plagues. Her abominations have been, and are, supported by the evil power among all nations. All societies have partaken of her cup, some in great and some in small degree: but the Lord is casting up an highway for his redeemed to pass through.

I desire that our Society may come out of her mixtures, and remain on that foundation that cannot be removed; for the day is coming, when all her works, and all her abominations, shall be cast, as with a millstone, into the depth of the sea. Astonishment will surprise the people at her fall! for then will be great commotions and overturnings in the nations:—when, wars and rumours will be heard. I earnestly desire that we may not go forth to look, or wonder at her fall; but remain *still* in our habitations; not making conjectures concerning it, or the various commotions—while the potsherds of the earth dash one against another; nor yet make it the subject of conversation; but dwell *deep*, in that Power, which, as with an Almighty Arm, will deliver His People.

SELECTED FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

A Paraphrase on some part of the 25th Psalm.

To thee, O God! my secret prayers arise;
On thee with confidence my soul relies:
Fountain of light and life! illume my mind,
To error subject, as by nature blind:
Teach me thy will, and lead me in thy ways,
And aid my tongue to lisp the notes of praise!

In times like these, when headstrong passions rage;
When vice and folly rule a faithless age;
When erring man is boasted reason's slave,
Vain of the gift, forgets the hand that gave,
Shall those that love thee be withheld by shame,
Their trust from owning in the eternal name?
Ah no!—far rather let the sons of pride
Return repentant to the unerring guide;
From sin and death, from doubt and darkness, flee
To light—to life—to happiness and thee.

The meek and lowly who upon thee wait,
Know that thy goodness as thy power is great:
They know thou wilt in boundless mercy roll
A tide of rapture o'er the humbled soul,
Which, fill'd with grief, with conscious guilt oppress'd,
To thee, the rock of ages, flies for rest.
Before thy throne with trembling hope I bend!
Thy wonted mercy to my soul extend;
That tender mercy which, of old display'd,—
Has ceaseless cherish'd all thy hand has made.

Great are my sins! to thy all-searching eye,
Expos'd in order, my transgressions lie;
Thou know'st each guilty thought, each secret stain,
That wrings my bosom with remorse and pain.
Great are my sins! but be those sins forgot;
My countless failings from thy memory blot.
Behold my grief, and give my heart to prove
The joys, the riches of thy pardoning love.
And oh! while wandering in this mortal state,
Where round my path unnumber'd dangers wait,
Where strong temptation oft incites to sin,
And restless passions raise a storm within,
Do thou be near me! let thy arm of power
From evil shield me in each trying hour:
To thee for aid I turn th' imploring eye,
To thee for pardon and for safety fly.

Supremely blest the man who feels thee near,
Whose life is govern'd by thy saving fear:
Thy love will lead him in the paths of peace;
Thy life-fraught presence all his joys increase:
Inform'd by thee, he only rightly knows
To enjoy the blessings which thy hand bestows:
To him more gay the bloom of spring appears;
A lovelier garb luxuriant summer wears;
More brilliant scenes autumnal fields display,
And more sublime the winter's stormy sway:
From all thy works his mind instruction draws;
In all, with rapture sees the great First cause:
And when descending to the oblivious tomb,
When life's frail taper yields to deepening gloom,
By no vain terror is his mind distrest;—
This scene is changing for eternal rest.
O'er death's dark gulph he casts serene his eye
To happier worlds, where joys immortal lie:
Where doubt and fear no more the soul appal,
Where peace forever reigns, where thou art all in all.

Source of all good! continue still to pour
Thy countless blessings on Columbia's shore:
Still keep, in mercy, from her fields afar,
The woes, the horrors of wide-wasting war:
Alike remote preserve her favour'd race
From proud aggression and submission base;
Teach them, that shame and ruin vice await,
That virtue only makes a nation great:
That strength and peace will but from union flow;
But, above all things, teach them thee to know.

Burlington, April 3d, 1798.

[In the "Fire-side, No. 3." under the head of CHEMISTRY was republished from the Connecticut Journal an account of the invention of the Hydrostatic machine or Blow-pipe.—That account, it appears, is erroneous: And, that the correction may extend as far as the error has reached, we have been requested to insert the following Extract from a communication signed Philo-Chymiæ, which appeared in Poulson's American Daily Advertiser of 12th mo. 1804.

"The Hydrostatic machine or Blow-pipe," described "as the joint invention of Professor Silliman and Mr. Robert Hare, junior, is well known to be solely the contrivance of the latter—as it was exhibited to the Chemical Society of Philadelphia, and an account published by them, before Professor Silliman bestowed any attention on that subject.

The object of Mr. Hare's apparatus is also very imperfectly held up to view, which I feel the more disposed to correct, as it is not the first instance in which this has been done, and as my habits of intimacy with that gentleman, enable me to retrace the whole progress of his invention. It is true that Mr. Hare's machine affords, with very little labour, a steady blast of air for the ordinary, but useful purposes of the Blow-pipe, but it is probable that no mechanical improvement could increase the power of this instrument much beyond that, which it has already obtained in the hands of the celebrated Artists and Chemists of Europe. It was by a chemical discovery of the joint effect of two species of air, and of the means of the application of this effect, that the very great heat was obtained, which is alluded to by the author of the article above-mentioned, to whom however it might be recommended to study enough of the science he so justly admires, to know that pure clay or alumine was fused by Lavoisier—a fact well known to the gentleman above named,

whose knowledge on this subject his very praises would implicate—indeed, alumine was the only pure earth which has been fused. By the discovery of Mr. Hare, the earths, Barytes, Strontites and Silex, were added to the list of substances, perfectly fusible, and lime and magnesia were for the first time imperfectly fused —Platina the most refractory of the metals, was not only fused, but volatized.

I presume that the union of the name of Professor Silliman with that of Mr. Hare, has arisen from a paper, published by the latter, in the first part of the sixth volume of the American Philosophical Transactions, wherein it appears that, while jointly engaged in a course of experiments, they contrived to unite the principle of the hydrostatic Blow-pipe with that of the pneumatic tube."

FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

By your *Fire-side*, *Taper*, and *Phosphoric light*.
I flattered myself, and with reason,
In having, as I thought, a very good right,
To be *cheer'd*, in this cold and dull season:

And to tell you the truth, I have not been deny'd
A portion of rational pleasure,
When I've taken a seat, by your good Fire-side,
In an hour of ease, and of leisure:—

May your fire burn *bright*, and your Taper ne'er *fave*,
And may they in all respects prosper;
But let me beseech you, my friend, to beware
That you do not *extinguish* your *Phosphor*.—

I advert to the danger of bodies like these,
As well as of tapers, and torches;
But must we discard them, because your friend sees
Some probable danger they'll scorch us?

You may profit, perhaps, by the aid of their light,
And shun many pitfalls and ditches;
But if you prefer the gloom of the night,
Extinguishers use and not Switches.

May *wisdom* attend you, with knowledge and learning,
And *virtue* her stellar effulgence impart,
To aid you conjointly, in rightly discerning,
What's best calculated for mending the heart.—

ALIQUEM.

Jan. 9th.

WEALTH AND POWER—SOCIETY.

It must be obvious to every observer, that the influence of power and wealth over the affections is in many instances inimical to the happiness, as well as to the virtue of individuals. It is this prevailing sentiment which renders people, whom fortune has placed in the middling ranks of society, ashamed of their station; and this false shame prompts them to live in such a manner as may induce a belief of their opulence at the expense of their independence. What must be the consequence to their unfortunate children? Accustomed to consider honour and esteem attached to luxury, and to connect the ideas of penury with disgrace, how bitter must to them be that poverty in which, by the folly of their parents, they must be inevitably involved!

Never was there a period when the circumstance I have above alluded to, called for more serious consideration than at the present moment. Never till now, since Britain first rose to distinction among nations, were the middling classes of her children held in contempt. But where is now that middling class, which used to be considered the glory and the strength of the empire? Should one not imagine it to be extinct; and that *genteel* and *ungenteel* formed the sole known distinctions in society? Even those whose virtues would have done honour to the soil in which they sprang have caught the contagion, and, by considering *greatness* alone as worthy of regard and estimation, have aimed a parricidal blow at humble virtuous mediocrity.

I am well aware of the obloquy to which I may expose myself by standing forth the champion of that unfashionable virtue, which, by being connected with an independent spirit, has been brought into disgrace, as savouring of republicanism; but while the test I have proposed is for me, it is of little consequence to me who shall be against me.

Of those crimes to which the pursuit of wealth and power so frequently leads, I forbear to speak; they are so obvious and so well known, that every parent who has the least degree of principle, will naturally endeavour to guard his child against them. But it may be questioned, whether their endeavours are always so directed as to insure success. If children have been taught to associate every idea of felicity with grandeur, every idea of respect and admiration with worldly honours and preferment, is it to be supposed, that by a few lessons on the danger of avarice and ambition, their associations will be counteracted? Constant witnesses of our solicitude to appear members of the world of fashion, of our incessant pains to make acquaintance with the rich and great, while we despise or neglect the *good;* can we imagine, that riches and grandeur will not become the predominant desire of their hearts? With this desire the principles of worldly honour may indeed be made to quadrate; but let us remember, that with it the principles of religion and of sound sterling virtue must be eternally at variance.

We are taught to look upon the present period as an awful and portentous crisis, big with alarm to the rising generation. In one respect it is so. The increasing prevalence of luxury, with the universal decrease of the means of procuring it, in the middle classes, must inevitably expose the rising generation to all the evils resulting from luxurious habits and dependant fortunes. The unhappy consequences must be foreseen by every thinking mind, and deprecated by every generous soul, abhorrent at the ideas of vice and slavery.

Were children taught by the conduct of their parents, as well as by the lessons of their preceptors, to estimate the advantages of wealth and power at *their proper value*; were the virtues of frugality, temperance, and economy, once more recalled from their long and hopeless banishment, to some degree of respect and estimation; and were that approbation and esteem, which is now bestowed on greatness, once more to become the meed of merit; have we not reason to expect, that this *portentous crisis* would terminate in national prosperity, built, not on the quicksand of extended commerce and flourishing manufacture, not on the blood-stained treasures of the East or West, but on the solid rock of public and private virtue?

Let every mother who has a sufficient degree of patriotism, and of parental tenderness, to feel a glow of heart in the contemplation of such a picture, consider herself as an instrument in the hand of Providence to contribute to its realization. Let her reflect, how much the proper education of one single family may eventually contribute towards it; and that while the fruits of her labours are a rich harvest of peace, happiness, and virtue, which may descend through generations yet unborn, she will herself enjoy a glorious and eternal reward.

It is because they are hopeless of being able to stem the torrent by individual exertion, that individuals permit themselves to be carried down by the stream: for I am persuaded, that were all the joys of ambition, luxury, and dissipation, to be pursued by those alone who find pleasure in them, the number of their votaries would soon be considerably diminished. We are far more solicitous to *appear* happy than to be really so; and to this *appearance* of happiness the reality is often sacrificed. Health,

peace, and competence, are essential to human felicity; yet health, and peace, and competence, are despised as vulgar blessings, of which we make a willing offering at the shrine of fashion.

Even the pleasures of society, pleasures so congenial to the human heart, are now almost exploded. When the feast of hospitality is spread by friendship for the objects of esteem and affection, it never fails to produce satisfaction, complacency, and delight. By convivial cheerfulness the cares of life are suspended, while sympathy opens the heart to the impressions of benevolence. The powers of conversation are then called forth with peculiar advantage. Sentiments are developed, and obtain a value from their currency, which was unknown even to the utterer. This is society, and for what is it now exchanged? For parties, where pride and ostentation open their doors for the reception of the vain and idle; for well-dressed mobs, who meet to complain of crowd, and heat, and noise, or to wrangle at the card-table; or, as Miss Edgworth expresses it, '*to show their fine clothes, to weary and hate each other:*' and this is called *happiness!* but let the heart be asked, whether it deserves the name? If, by false association, the mind had not been enslaved to the name of *fashion*, is it not probable that we should have continued to prefer the social and improving intercourse of friendship to the tiresome and disgusting insipidity of a stupid crowd?

But it is only in such crowds that people in a certain sphere can hope to mix with those of a superior rank. But for this blessed contrivance, they might have been condemned for ever to associate with their equals!

Let people who argue in this way, reflect what they really gain by this sort of acquaintance with their superiors;—a knowledge of their persons, and the privilege of exchanging bows and curtsies. And is this a recompense for the sacrifice of time and fortune, and the social intercourse of friendship, and all the joys (to say nothing of the duties) of domestic life? Surely it could never be so deemed, were it not for the abiding and powerful influence of early associations, which has connected the idea of happiness with a certain style of life, that has been adopted by those who are in possession of that wealth and power to which we are taught to bow with the implicit reverence of devotion.

This unhappy association is, indeed, a floodgate to a tide of evils so extensive, so beyond the power of calculation to enumerate, that all I can say upon the subject must be considered only as hints, intended to draw the attention towards it. Different as its operation is upon the sexes, we shall find it equally inimical to the happiness and virtue of both. From habit and situation, the love of wealth and power is, in the female mind, somewhat circumscribed in its effects; but the associations arising from it do not fail to influence the heart and the conduct as essentially, though in a different direction, in the female as in the male part of the species; the ambition of vanity being little less injurious in its consequences than the ambition of pride. The passion for distinction is, it is true, apparently gratified at an easier rate in the one sex than in the other. But when distinction is sought after through the medium of vanity and folly, frivolity and dissipation, what is the result? Let us look around, and we shall be at no loss for an answer, *a melancholy answer!*

[*Elizabeth Hamilton's Letters on Education.*

TO THE CIRCLE AT THE FIRE-SIDE.

Well, friends, I think we're in the dark!
Our Taper's glimmering to a spark;
And while on Phosphorus we gaze,
Delighted with its lambent rays,
Our Editor, with sullen cheer,
Has bid the splendour disappear.

Now, what's at present to be done,
Is what I would consult upon.
'Tis true, we're placed at social chimney,
Before a fire that blazes trimly;
Good manners, and good company,
Endear the scene, when you are by.

There, snugly seated in a nook,
Varola with his sacred book:
Simplicius, tells his tender tale,
Soft as a summer evening's gale:
Angus, the Muse's happy son,
In chasteness, vies with Addison;
Contends with Goldsmith, for the Bay;
Or touches sweet, the lyre of Gray.
But tell me, Sirs, how can it be,
I meet in such good company,
Ill manners and Scurrility!

In Phosphor, happy critic! lies
That native wit, which can devise,
To censure terms, or mend the sense;
Yet give to genius no offence.
But when did genius, tell me pray,
Descend to call ill* names, or say
A word about corporeal switching!
Such silly elves need better teaching.

So next before I make my entry,
Dismiss your spitting, switching, gentry.
Let decent manners mark the man,
You choose to join your social plan;
Then oft I'll share your cheerful fire;
And, what perhaps you all desire,
To grace each subject you may handle,
I'll bring a

SPERMACETI CANDLE.

January 21st, 1805.

* See the lines signed a "Switch."

Peter the Great and a country Clergyman.

The Czar Peter of Russia, was too wise a monarch to lose sight for a moment of so important an object as agriculture. Whatever part of the world he visited, nothing relative to that science escaped his attention. In all his travels, whether through France, Holland, or Germany, when he saw the country people at work on the right or left of the road, he left his carriage to observe them, and generally conversed with them on the subject of their occupations. He frequently entered their houses, examined every thing, particularly their utensils of husbandry, of which he sometimes made drawings on the spot, and always wrote down his remarks on tablets he carried about him for that purpose. It was more especially his amusement at each stage while the horses were changing.

As he was passing through a village, on his return to Paris, he saw a man dressed very differently from the peasants, at work in a garden of moderate extent. Finding, on inquiry, that this laborious cultivator was the vicar of the place, he entered the garden, which he perceived to be well stocked with handsome fruit trees, the house being situated in the middle, and a little forest of mulberry trees behind. The Czar conversed with him a full half hour, and learned that the greatest part of the trees had been planted by the vicar himself, who still continued to prune them with his own hands. The prince asked, with astonishment, why he was obliged to submit to such laborious occupations, and if his parishioners never gave him their assistance?—Very seldom, sir, answered the vicar: when any of them have a few moments leisure, they do not want a good inclination; but they have always so much business themselves, that they have little time to spare to do mine. However, the duties of my office leave me sufficient for the cultivation of my little piece of ground; and if the season is favourable, I always make a few hundred livres a year by the sale of my fruits and silk, which are a very necessary addition to my slender allowance.

The Russian monarch was enchanted, and wrote down the name of this worthy pastor in his tablets: then turning to the

companions of his travels—'Observe 'this worthy ecclesiastic,' said he, 'the 'labour of his hands supplies him with 'cyder, wine, and ready money into the 'bargain. Do not fail to remind me of 'him when we return to Russia: I'll try 'if there are any means to animate our 'village priests to cultivate their glebes, 'in order to deliver them at once from 'poverty and sloth.'

To the Editors of the Evening Fire-side.

Your Predecessor's last collection,
Without much critical inspection,
Has broken my determination,
And forc'd me to resume the station
Of censor Generallissimo;
To all his guests, except N. O.
I'd freely whisper in his ear,
If I believ'd none else would hear—
(But secrecy's not worth my while)
I like him much, but not his style.

To censure much a correspondence
In which there's not the *least redundance*,
Might be productive of some evil:
Besides, it might be thought uncivil.
Each has displayed much learned light,
To show us how to speak and write.
Even in the latter's introduction
There's much amusement and instruction.
Neither his talents has o'errated:
That knotty point was well debated—

Caleb's long wanderings now are o'er,
O, may he never wander more!—
His muse's voice did not much falter,
Till they arriv'd at fam'd Gibraltar:
He dragg'd her there along the strand;
This he perform'd with his left hand—
Her Ladyship of course was flutter'd;
Some incoherent thoughts she utter'd,
Which the unreasonable wight
Wrote down verbatim with his right.
"One line for sense and one for rhyme
"Are quite sufficient at one time.
We cannot quite so well dispense,
With all for rhyme and none for sense.

If I may guess, in what I say,
(And custom tells me that I may)
He who translated verses Spanish,
Perhaps has let some beauties vanish:
But this is only mere conjecture,
Unworthy of a serious lecture.

Now, muse, put on thy best array,
And all thy flattering arts display.
Our Editor is going to leave us!
A circumstance that ought to grieve us.
I'll summon to my aid discretion;
I'll smooth my harshness of expression,
To thank him for all favours past—
But more especially *the last*.
His farewell courteous address
Demands it—and I can't do less:
He's done the business so genteelly,
I feel dispos'd to praise him freely.
His Patrons *he* has so beprais'd,
That every sinner looks amaz'd—
A set of literary drones!
Who willingly would risk their bones,
In catering dainties for their bodies.
Their only care to scheme and plod is:
And so inveterate are their habits
Of gathering gold and buying Rabbits,
The phantom Fame cannot allure them,
Nor ——'s mighty genius cure them.

PHOSPHORUS.

SUMMARY OF INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.—By the latest accounts from Europe, it appears, the question of peace or war between England and Spain was not then decided.—The Porte, it is said, has refused to acknowledge Bonaparte's imperial dignity; but has declared to the different ministers its determination to remain neutral, in case of a rupture between France and Russia.—The relations between the cabinet of St. Cloud and that of Vienna, appear to be intimate and friendly.—Denmark and Sweden remain inactive.—The subject of the invasion of England is scarcely noticed. On the 1st of 11th mo. a terrible fire destroyed all the S. W. part of the city of Gottenburg (Sweden) containing, besides public edifices, between two and three hundred houses, dislodging more than seven thousand people.

DOMESTIC.—The proceedings on the impeachment of the judges of the supreme court of Pennsylvania, are at length terminated; the judgment of the senate as a court of impeachment, having been rendered on the 28th ult. when the votes appeared as follows: to convict, 13—to acquit, 11. The constitution requiring two-thirds to convict; the judges were of course acquitted of the charges exhibited against them.

The last eastern mail has not yet arrived. In various directions, we hear, the great roads are almost impassable in consequence of the drifted snow, which in many of the by-roads has so accumulated as to block them up entirely. Some of the stages have been obliged to cut their way through banks of snow which overtopped the horses' backs.

On the coast, the inclemency of the season has been severely felt. Many accounts have been received of the crews of ships having their limbs frozen, and several instances have occurred of their perishing with the cold. The number of vessels stranded has exceeded the experience of former years. Under date of the 26th ult. we have the following:—Five sail of vessels are stranded on the southward of Cape Hatteras, every soul on board of which perished; among them were the schooner Polly and Peggy, of Norfolk, and a schooner from New York, with 30 passengers. A ship ashore on Roanoke, one on Hog Island, and one at the pitch of the Capes.

From Danbury (Conn.) we learn, that the winter has been there unusually severe; on the 4th ult. at sun-rise, the mercury in a thermometer exposed to atmospheric air, stood at 15 degrees below 0; and on the 12th ult. at the same hour, 19 degrees below 0!—An intenseness of cold very seldom experienced in that latitude.

On the 18th ult. a severe thunder-storm was experienced in New London; the lightning was vivid, the thunder heavy, and the rain fell in torrents. At the same time every object presented the dazzling glare of ice.

[The former Editor of this paper having resigned his charge, and formally taken leave of its patrons, they may probably inquire how it is to be conducted in future, and on what rest its pretensions to their continued support. In answer, it may just be said, that two individuals have undertaken the charge of the Evening Fire-side, whose endeavours shall be directed, not only to keep alive its flame, but to preserve, and if possible, increase its usefulness and splendour. For this purpose, they invite, nay, call on those whose abilities have heretofore been so successfully employed to enrich this paper from the stores of thought; on those who have appeared in its columns as the able advocates for religion, morality, and science; and on those also, who have given to virtue the inviting attire of cheerfulness and chaste hilarity. Without such assistance their individual efforts would be unavailing. But this has been promised them. Encouraged also with the assurance of support from characters of ability in various and distant places, they anticipate success, and indulge the hope that their literary funds, will, ere long, be so increased, as to render their labours necessary, not so much to the gathering together of materials, as to the selecting and arranging of them in such a manner as may best comport with the principles laid down in the Prospectus of the Evening Fire-side.]

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The hints of our *East Bradford Friend* deserve attention. We invite his correspondence as the means of enabling us to progress in improvement. Agricultural inquiries certainly deserve regard, and shall be pursued as far as the *Communications of the Friendly and Intelligent* furnish us with the ability.

ROLAND'S *Effusions* were truly acceptable. We hope for a continuation of them.

We are well pleased to recognize PHOSPHORUS among our visitors; but think his strictures sufficiently severe. With respect to Caleb's Epistles, we are far from joining him in the wish,

"O, may he never wander more!"

The *two Communications* from our New York Correspondent, would have been inserted, had they not already slipped into print. We are desirous of his future favours.

Much reliance is placed on the expected aid of the Invisibles. We hope they will keep it in view.

To our Company in general—who have sent us their *good wishes*, enlightened us with their *lambent rays*, and endeavoured to diffuse the spirit of *benevolence*, we give a general welcome.

PUBLISHED BY JOSEPH RAKESTRAW, & CO.
NO. 84, NORTH FRONT-STREET,
Where Subscriptions and Communications will be received.